CHAPTER 9

SO...

WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED, COOPER?

I'M TELLING YOU MAN, YOU DON'T NEED TO KNOW SHIT ABOUT ME.

I'M WILLING TO STAY HERE, CAUSE I GOT FUCK ELSE RIGHT NOW, BUT WE'RE NOT BUDDIES.
I'M NOT SAYING WE HAVE TO BE *FRIENDS*, I JUST WANT TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU.

WHY? WHY DO YOU NEED TO KNOW SO BAD? WHAT'S THAT GONNA SOLVE?

OKAY.
OKAY, I'LL STOP BOTHERING YOU ABOUT THIS.
I'M SORRY.

GOOD.

FEEL FREE TO TAKE WHATEVER YOU'D LIKE FROM THE FRIDGE.

YEAH, YEAH, YOU ALREADY SAID THAT.

YOU O-

SHH.

QUIET, REMEMBER?

YOU OKAY?

YES, I'M FINE. JUST A BIT...
I DON'T KNOW. I'M FRUSTRATED THAT HE FEELS THAT HE CAN'T TRUST ME I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING TO HIM, SO I DON'T KNOW WHERE THIS IS COMING FROM.

I'VE HEARD PEOPLE CAN BE LIKE THAT.

UNTRUSTWORTHY.

HM?

NO, NO, HE'S NOT THE ONE WHO'S UNTRUSTWORTHY.

I AM.
TO HIM,
AT LEAST.

BUT YOU'RE NICE!
I DON'T SEE WHY HE CAN'T JUST TELL YOU THINGS.

IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE, I SUPPOSE. HE MUST HAVE REASON.

WEL

SHH-

WELL, IF HE DOESN'T WANT TO TELL YOU,

YOU SHOULD GIVE HIM A REASON TO.

...WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

YOU KNOW, LET HIM KNOW HE ISN'T WELCOME IF HE DOESN'T TELL YOU EVERYTHING HE KNOWS!

TOPAZ, WHAT THE-

NO, NO I AM ABSOLUTELY NOT USING THAT AS- AS COLLATERAL.

THAT'S TERRIBLE! WHERE WOULD YOU GET AN IDEA LIKE THAT?

...NEVER MIND. I'M SORRY.

TOPAZ?

IT JUST FELT LIKE A GOOD IDEA.

DID YOUR CREATOR DO THAT?

...

I'M GOING TO CALL SOPHIE AND LET HER KNOW BOTH OF US ARE OKAY.

nod

Sophie

Riiiiing

Riiiiing

BZZZ

BZZZ

SUMMER? SUMMER, ARE YOU OKAY? YOU DISAPPEARED ALL OF A SUDDEN LAST NIGHT.

YES, YES I'M FINE, I'M SORRY, THINGS GOT OUT OF HAND FOR A MOMENT, BUT I FOUND TOPAZ. THEY'RE SAFE.

OH THANK GOD, WHERE WERE THEY? WHY'D THEY RUN OFF?

IT'S A, AH, LONG STORY. I CAN FILL YOU IN, OR-

COME OVER.

H-HUH?

YOU SAID YOU WERE SUCCESSFUL IN TURNING THAT HOPELESS BACK, SO LET'S CELEBRATE.

AND IT'S PROBABLY EASIER TO TELL ME IN PERSON, RIGHT?

UM, I MEAN, THERE'S KIND OF A... THING.

WHAT THING?

THE HOPELESS- THE PERSON I SAVED IS STAYING HERE. FOR A WHILE. AND I DON'T WANT TO JUST KEEP LEAVING HIM ALONE.

THEN CAN I COME OVER THERE?

NOPE!!

AH, SORRY, I JUST MEAN- MY PLACE IS A MESS. IT'S NOT GOOD FOR COMPANY.

I DON'T MIND. YOU'VE SEEN THE STATE OF MY ROOF.

ALSO, UM, I DON'T THINK MY GUEST WOULD BE ECSTATIC ABOUT SOMEONE ELSE BEING HERE.

WELL... I GUESS YOU COULD COME OVER NEXT WEEKEND. I HAVE LONG WORK DAYS, SO...

AH- HM...

YEAH?

JUST, MAYBE, I WAS THINKING...

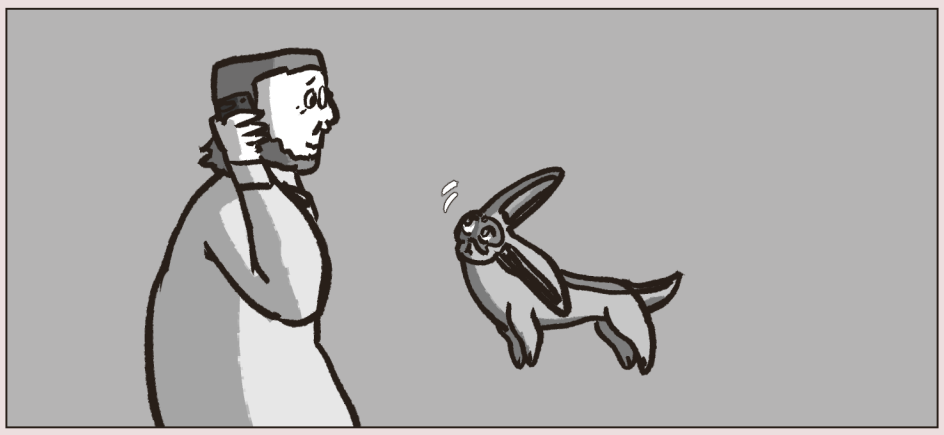
WELL, LET'S HEAR IT.

I NEED SOMEWHERE TOPAZ WILL BE OUT OF SIGHT, MAYBE I CAN DROP THEM OFF AND WE CAN MEET UP BRIEFLY?

WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO LOOK AFTER THEM FOR ME?

OH! SURE! DO YOU... THINK THEY'RE OKAY WITH ME?

HAHA, YEAH, THEY SAID YOU WERE NICE. I'M SURE THEY'D BE HAPPY TO, RIGHT?



THEY SAID IT'S FINE.

WELL, THEN GREAT! I'D BE HAPPY TO HAVE THEM STAY WITH ME.

OKAY, THANKS,

SEE YOU SOON.

OH.

HI.

UM, LISTEN, I'M SORRY TO LEAVE YOU ALONE AGAIN, BUT I NEED TO GO SEE SOMEONE.

IS IT...?

IS IT THE WOMAN I SAW...?

THE...

WOMAN...?

...NOTHING. NEVER MIND.

FORGET I SAID ANYTHING.

NO, NO, PLEASE, I'D LIKE TO KNOW, IF YOU'RE WILLING TO TELL ME.

THERE WAS A WOMAN. I THINK... I THINK I HURT HER REALLY BADLY.

HE MUST BE TALKING ABOUT SUMMER.

I DIDN'T WANT TO!
I SWEAR TO GOD,
I DIDN'T- I JUST...

I WASN'T IN
CONTROL OF
MY BODY.

DID YOU SEE A
WOMAN WHEN YOU
FOUND ME?
IS SHE OKAY?
IS SHE...

SHE'S SAFE.
AND UNHARMED.

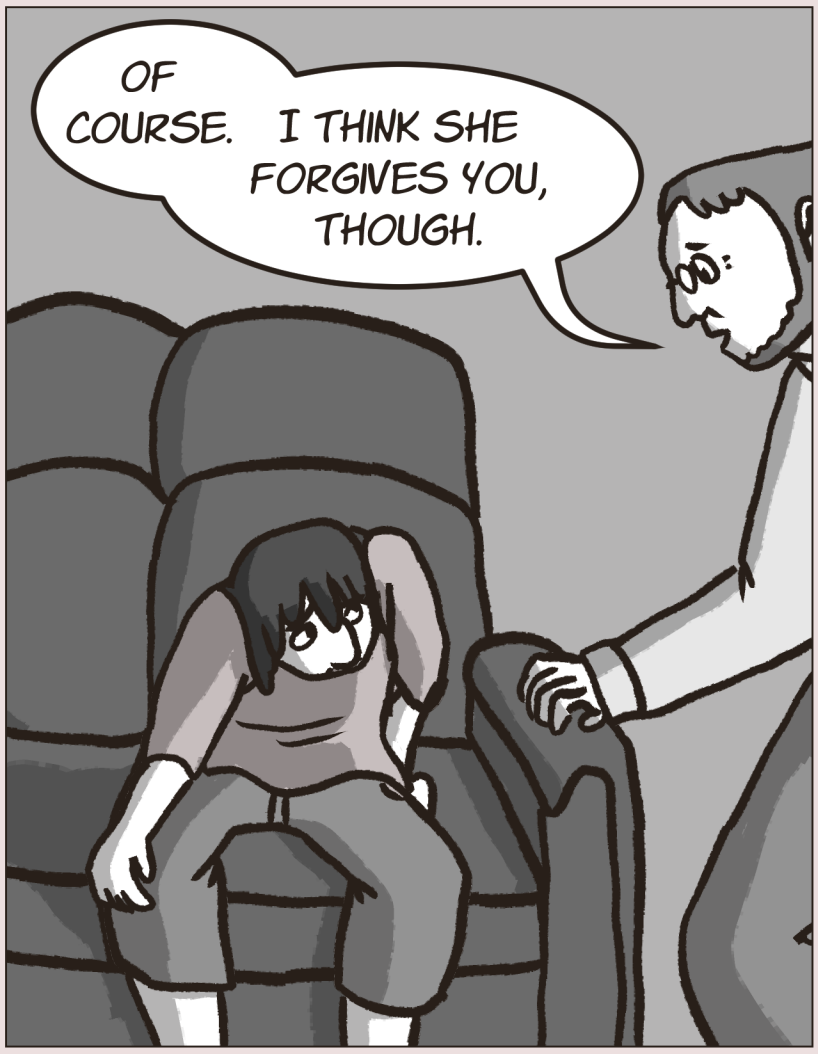
THANK
GOD...

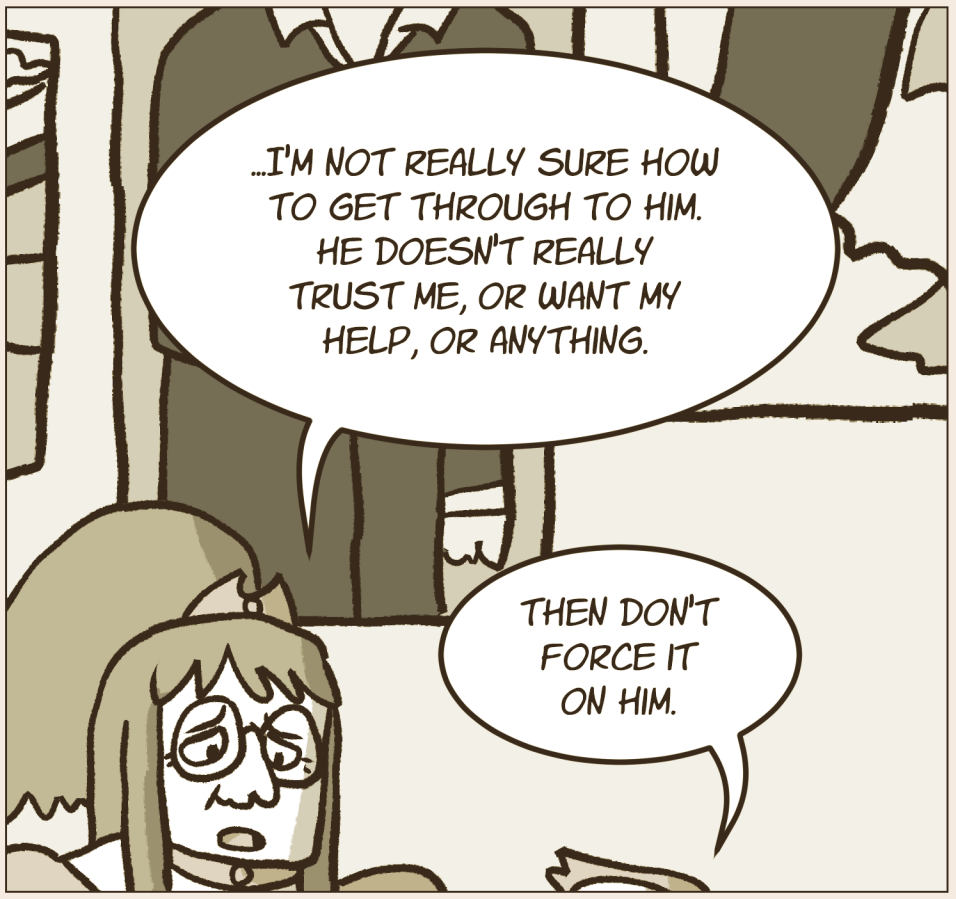
THANK GOD...

I THOUGHT I...

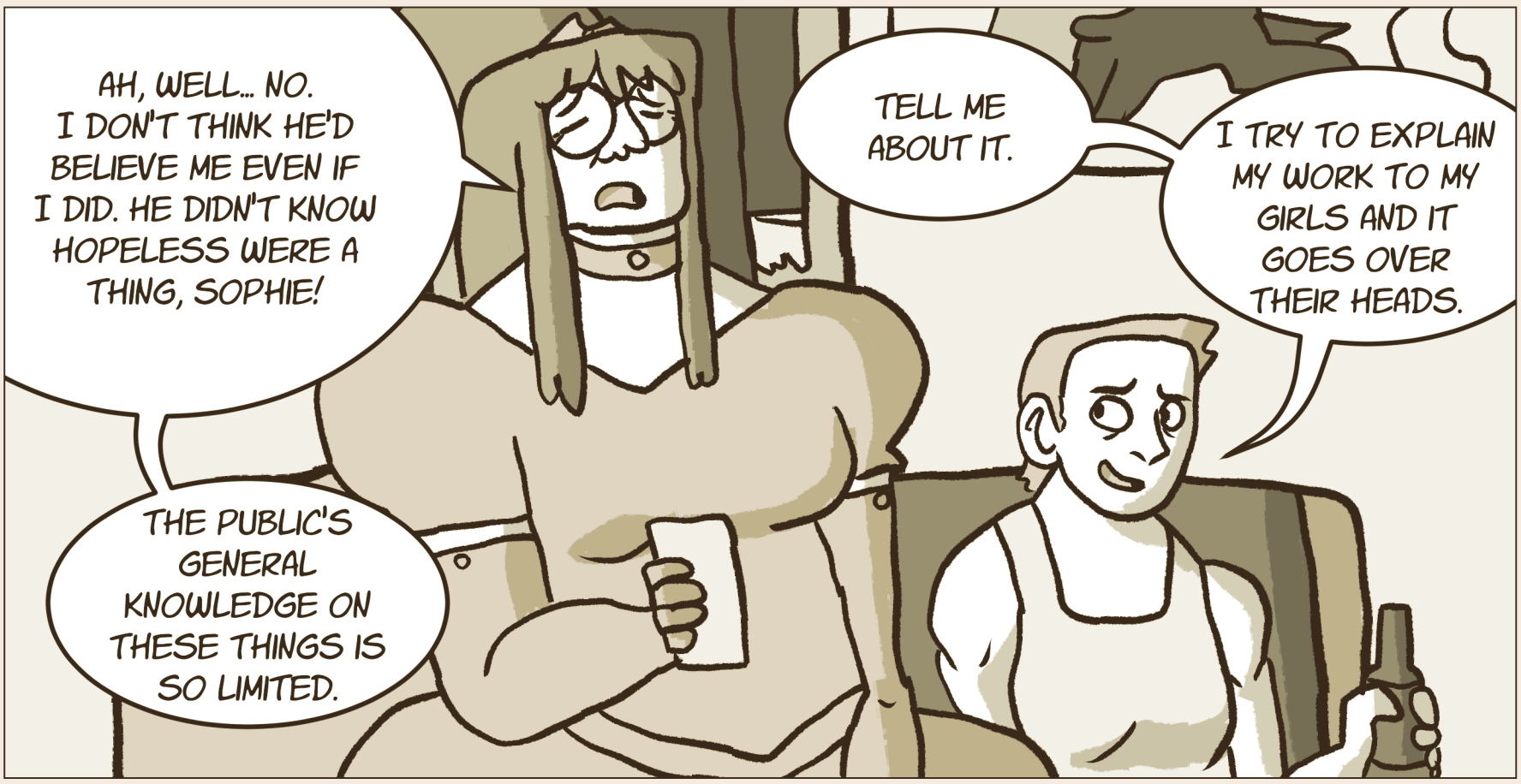
IF YOU SEE HER AGAIN, UH...

TELL HER... I'M SORRY FOR WHAT HAPPENED.


OF COURSE. I THINK SHE FORGIVES YOU, THOUGH.


...I'M NOT REALLY SURE HOW TO GET THROUGH TO HIM. HE DOESN'T REALLY TRUST ME, OR WANT MY HELP, OR ANYTHING.
THEN DON'T FORCE IT ON HIM.

SOME PEOPLE NEED SPACE, HON.
YOU'RE RIGHT, BUT... STILL. HE HAS ANSWERS THAT COULD HELP THIS WHOLE OPERATION! HE COULD HELP SAVE PEOPLE!
HAVE YOU TOLD HIM THAT?


AH, WELL... NO. I DON'T THINK HE'D BELIEVE ME EVEN IF I DID. HE DIDN'T KNOW HOPELESS WERE A THING, SOPHIE!
TELL ME ABOUT IT.
I TRY TO EXPLAIN MY WORK TO MY GIRLS AND IT GOES OVER THEIR HEADS.
THE PUBLIC'S GENERAL KNOWLEDGE ON THESE THINGS IS SO LIMITED.

IT'S REFRESHING HAVING SOMEONE KNOW EXACTLY WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.

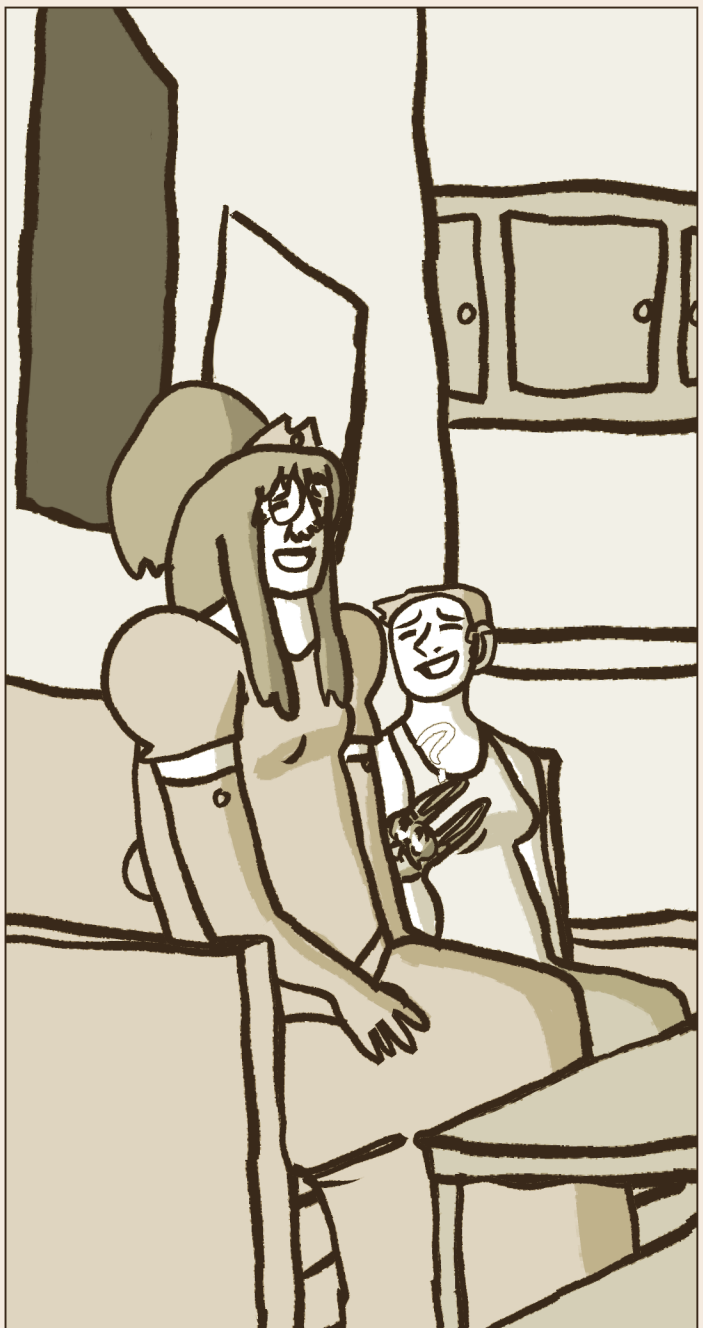
AHH, UM, YEAH, IT REALLY IS. I'M... REALLY GLAD I GET TO TALK WITH YOU ABOUT EVERYTHING.

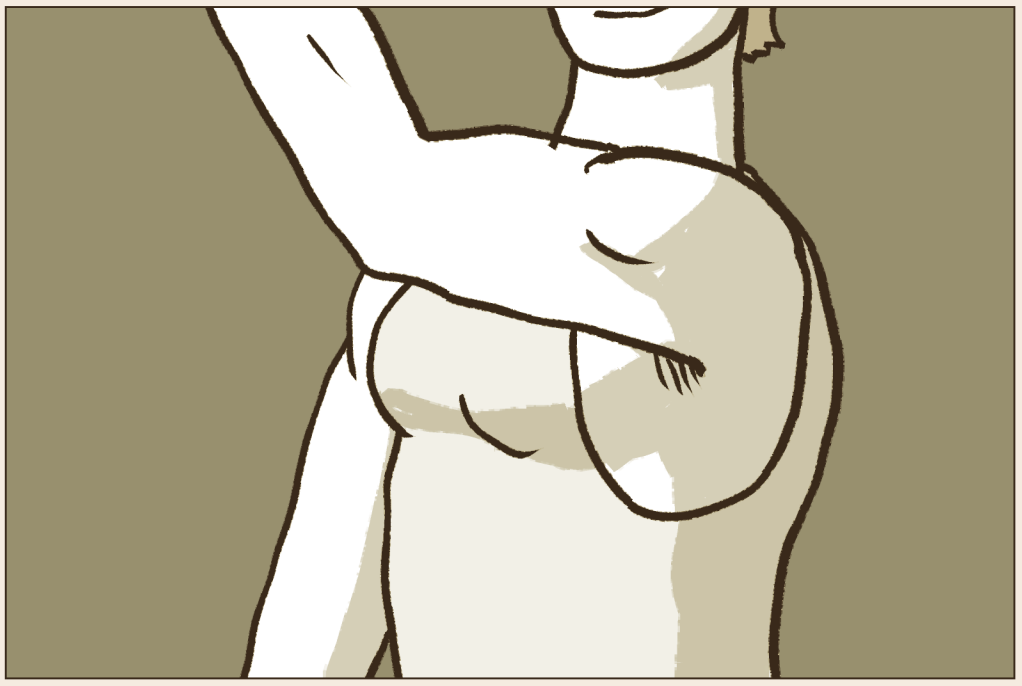
LEAN

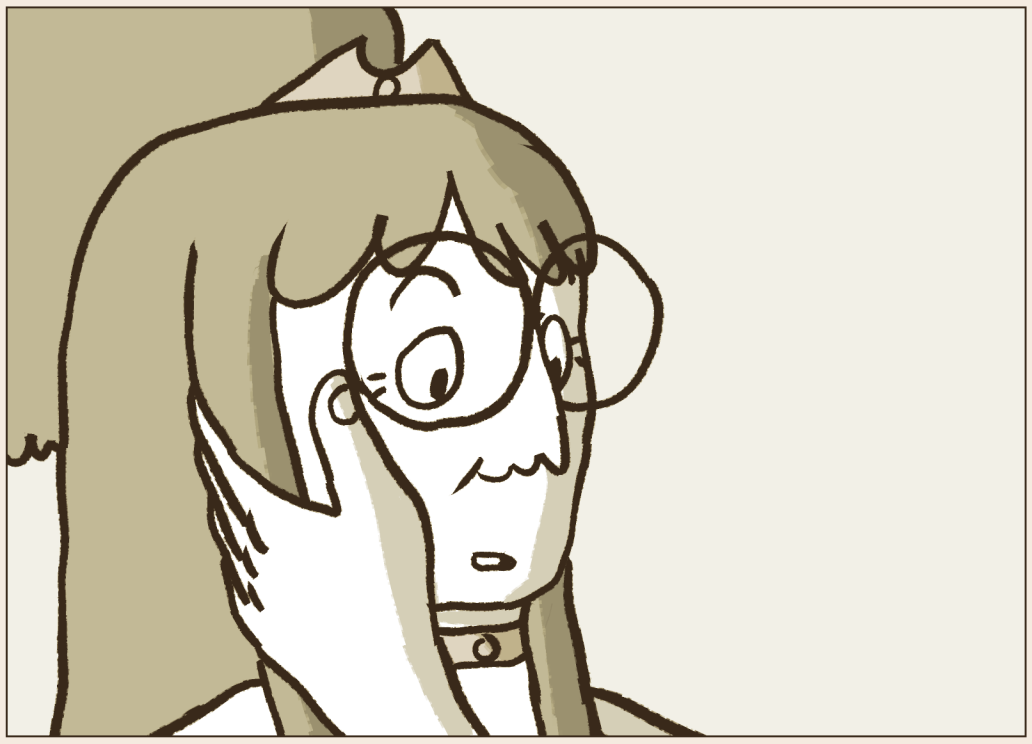
I THINK I'D PROBABLY GO CRAZY, HAVING TO KEEP ALL OF THIS TO MYSELF.

HA!

I'M GLAD I COULD HELP.

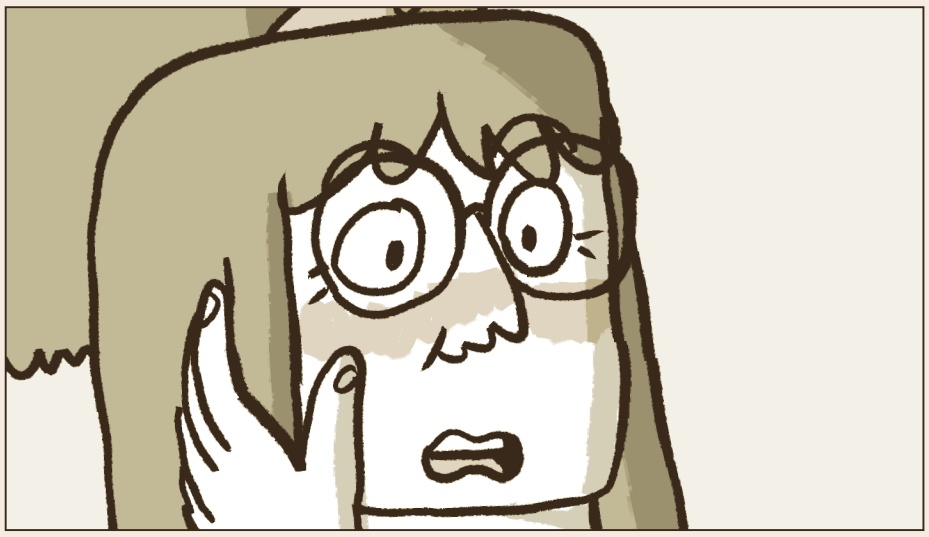






YOU HAVE A REALLY BEAUTIFUL LAUGH.

I-
I, AH-



YOU DON'T...

MEAN THAT.

YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL, SUMMER.

WHAT? OF COURSE I DO.

YOU HAVE A BEAUTIFUL LAUGH, A BEAUTIFUL SMILE...

WHAT... IS THIS?

BEAUTIFUL...

I CAN'T BE. I STILL HAVE THE SAME FACE, THE SAME BODY. THERE'S NO WAY SHE FINDS THAT BEAUTIFUL.

SOMETHING THE MATTER, HON?

I...
I JUST...

NO ONE'S EVER... CALLED ME THAT BEFORE.

I HAVE A HARD TIME BELIEVING THAT.

I MEAN IT!

I'VE NEVER MET A GIRL QUITE LIKE YOU, BEFORE.

YOU'RE BRAVE, BRILLIANT, AND I'M SERIOUS WHEN I SAY YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL, TOO.

YOU'RE THE FULL PACKAGE!

I'M NOT ANY OF THOSE THINGS. I'M NOT-

I NEVER HAVE BEEN.

THEN WHAT DO I SEE RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME?

NOTHING.

NOBODY WORTH LOOKING AT.

OH, HON...

THERE'S SO MUCH MORE TO YOU THAN YOU REALIZE.

YOU DON'T KNOW ME, SOPHIE.

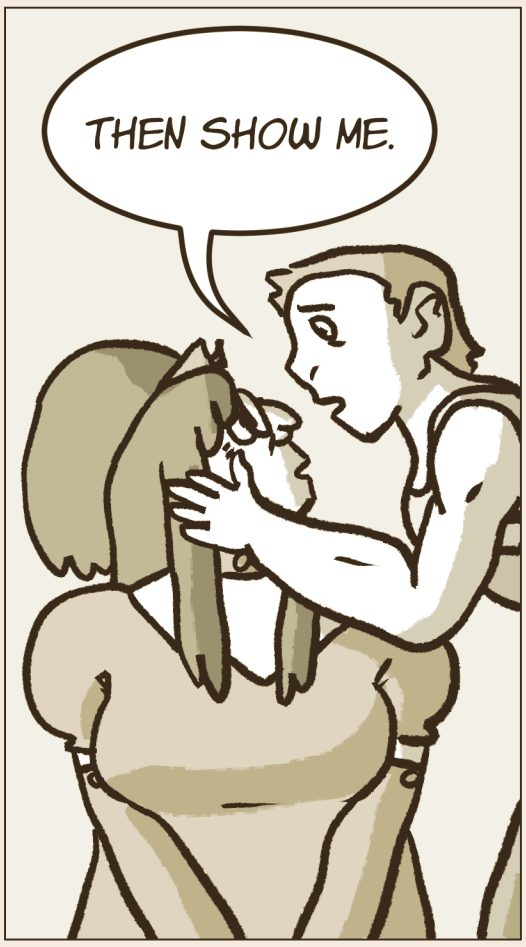
YOU'RE SUMMER! YOU'RE THAT WONDERFUL, MAGICAL GIRL THAT FELL FROM THE SKY RIGHT INTO MY ARMS.

I DON'T BELIEVE IN FATE, OR KARMA, OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT..

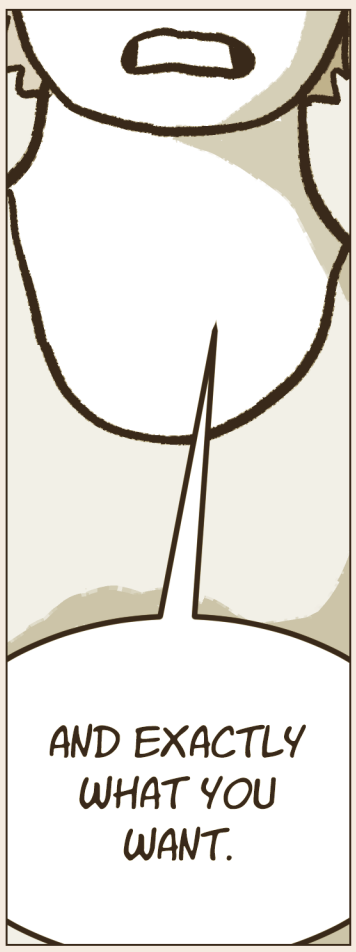
BUT I THINK I WAS MEANT TO MEET YOU.

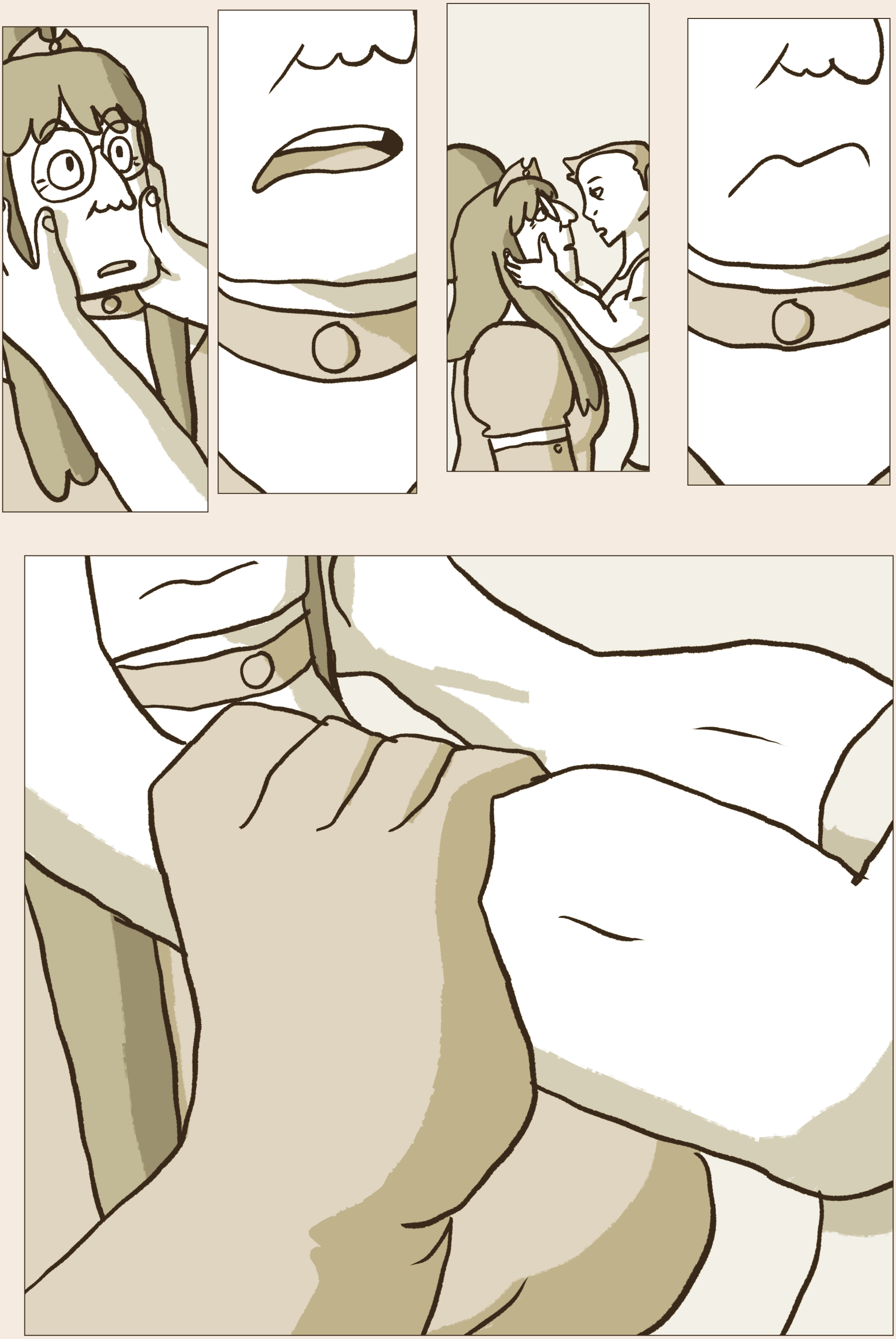
YOU'D HATE ME.

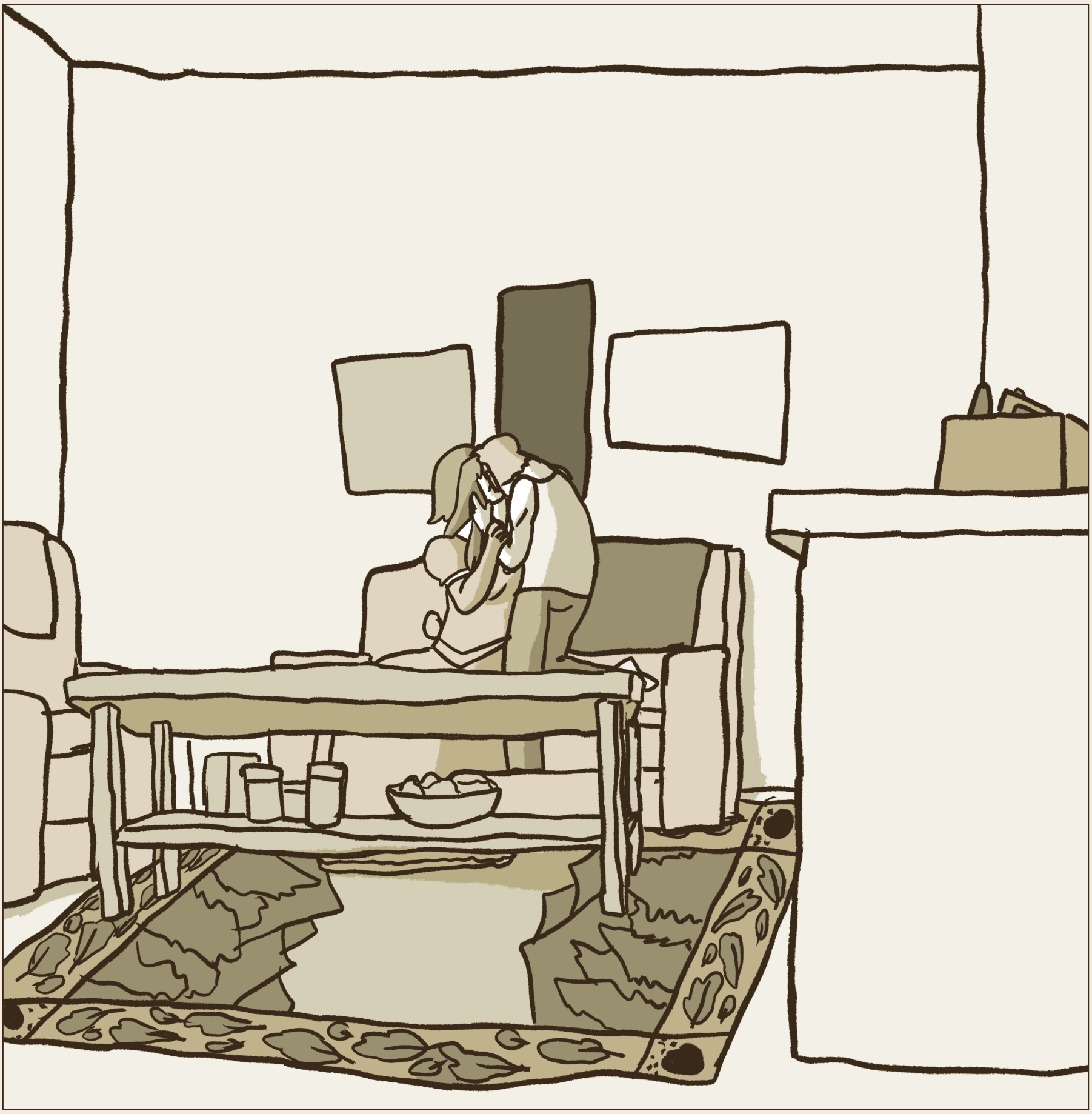
IF YOU KNEW WHO I REALLY WAS.


THEN SHOW ME.

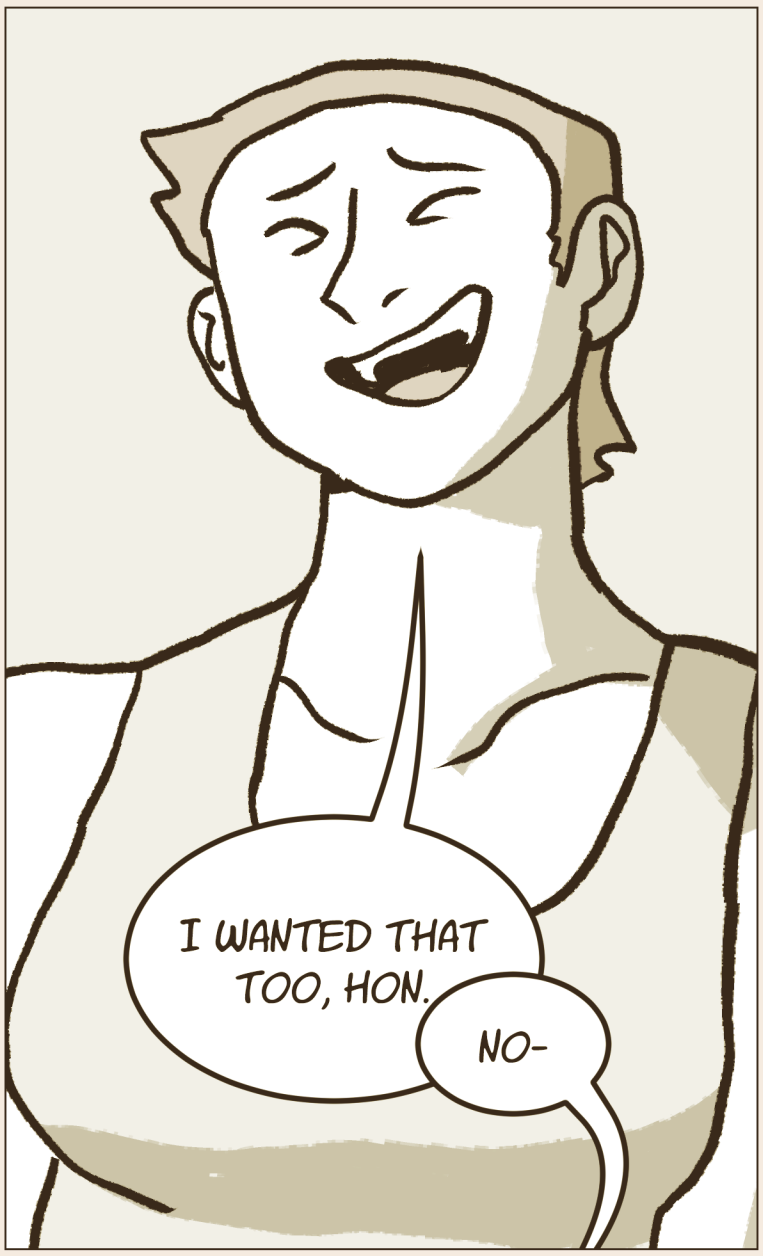
EXACTLY WHO YOU ARE.


AND EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANT.





I- I- I'M SO SORRY, I SWEAR I DIDN'T-


I WANTED THAT TOO, HON.
NO-

NO, NO, NO- I- I NEVER MEANT FOR IT TO GO THIS FAR-

I'M SORRY, I'M SO SORRY, I PROMISE- I PROMISE THIS WASN'T SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN.
IT'S OKAY, DON'T WORRY.

OH GOD, OH GOD, YOU'RE GOING TO HATE ME FOREVER.
I WON'T! I PROMISE I WON'T.

YOU DON'T-
YOU DON'T KNOW
ME, SOPHIE.

THEN
TELL ME.

YOU'LL
HATE ME.

YOU DON'T
KNOW THAT.

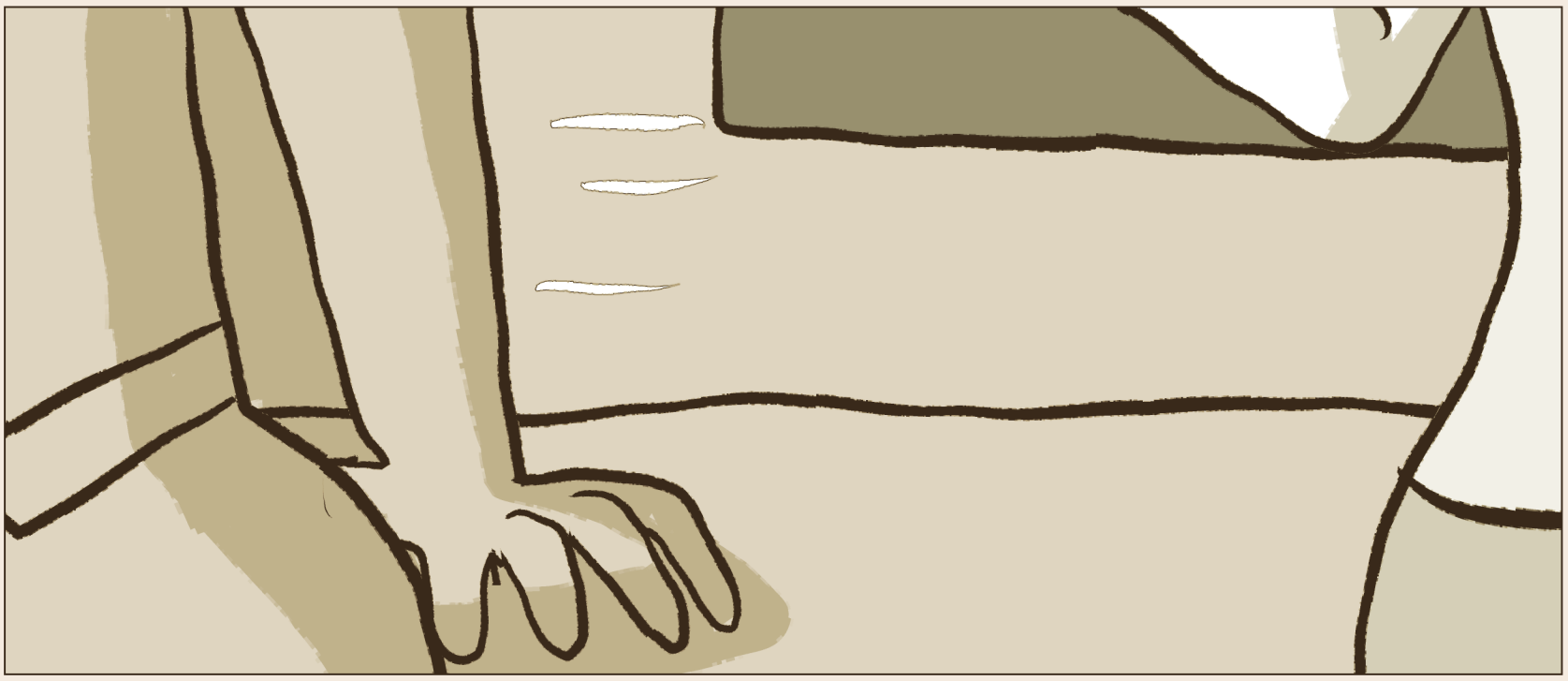
I DO. I DO.
YOU WILL.

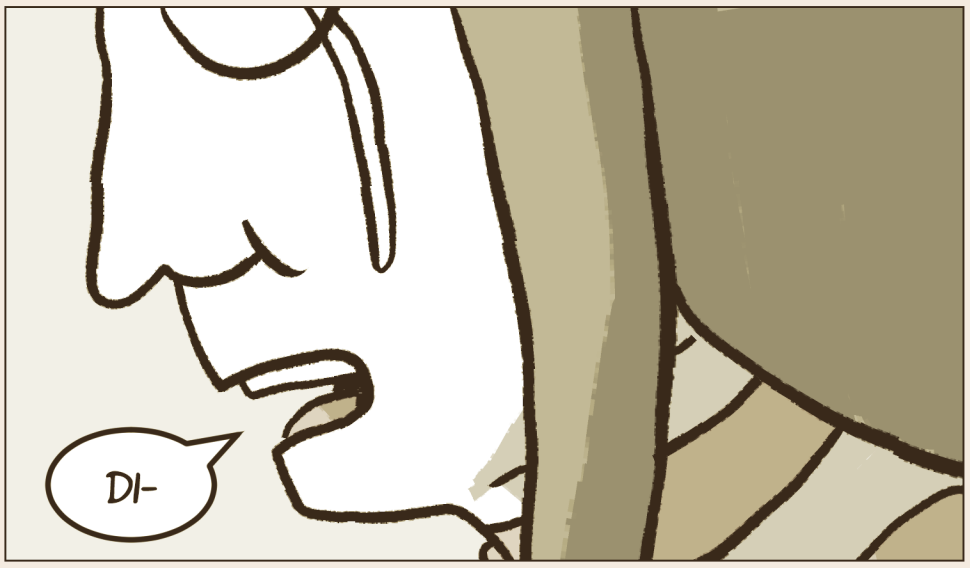
SUMMER-

THAT'S NOT-
THAT ISN'T WHO
I REALLY AM.

THEN
TELL ME.

TELL ME.

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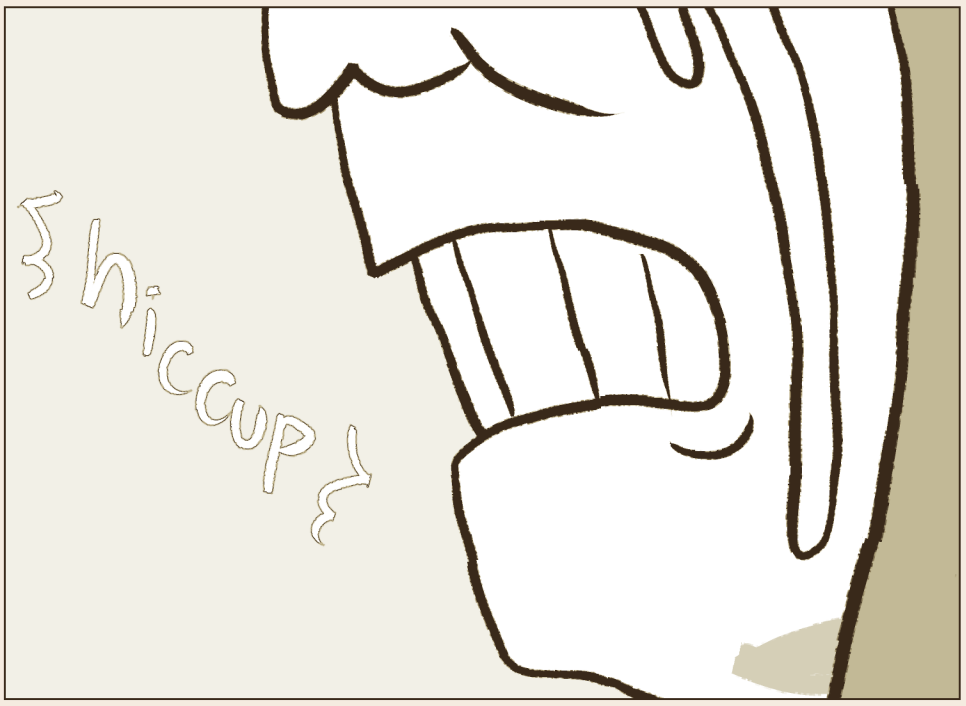

hiccup

DISPEL.

flinch

CY...

...RUS?

I'M SORRY...

I'M SORRY.
I'M SO,
SO SORRY.

BUT YOU WERE SO- YOU
TREATED ME LIKE I WAS

CYRUS, WHAT
THE FUCK.

YOU WERE- YOU *LIED* TO ME? WHY WERE YOU- YOU *KNEW*. ALL THIS TIME, YOU KNEW IT WAS ME.

AND LET ME GO ON BELIEVING I WAS TALKING TO- TO SOMEONE THAT I- FUCK, CYRUS...

WHAT THE FUCK! YOU- YOU WERE- I DON'T- EVEN HAVE ANY *WORDS* FOR HOW FUCKED UP THIS IS-

I TRUSTED YOU! YOU WERE ONE OF THE GOOD ONES, AND YOU DO *THIS*?!

I'M SORRY...

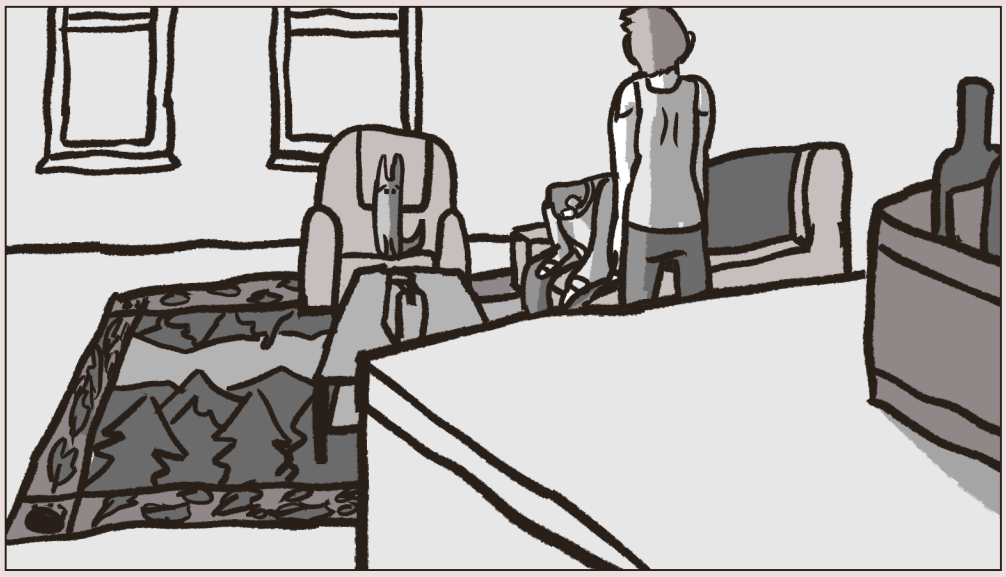
I'M SORRY...

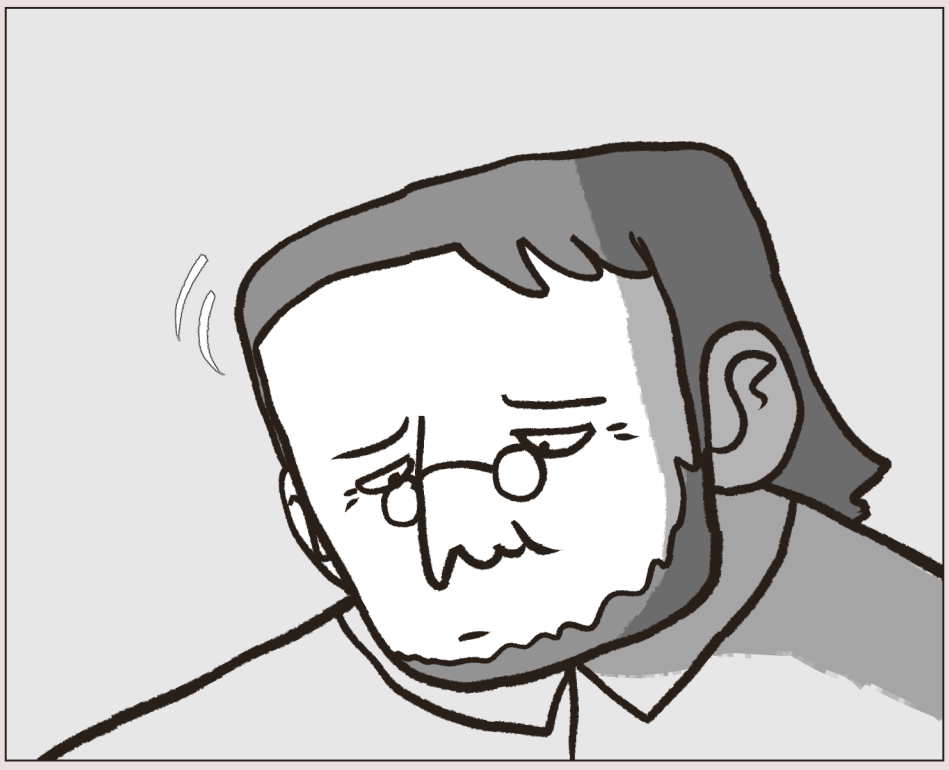
I'M SORRY...

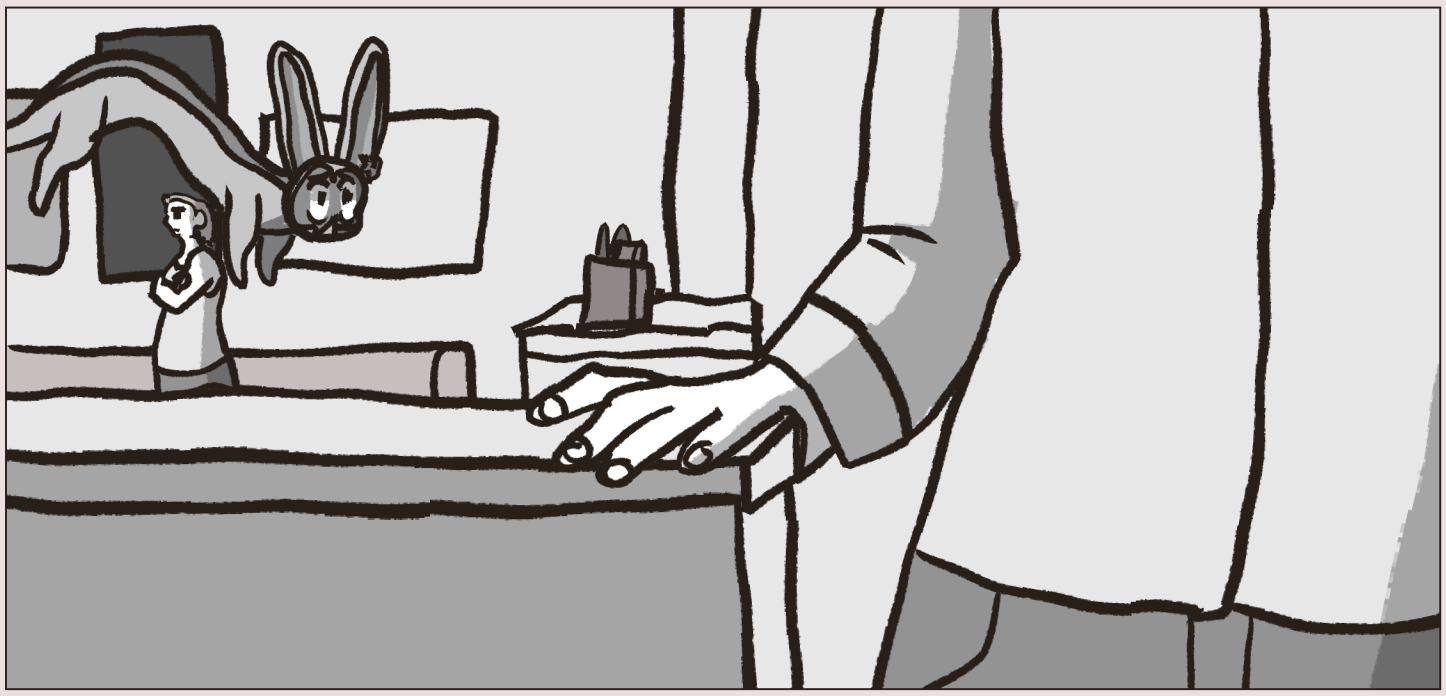
GO-
GET OUT.

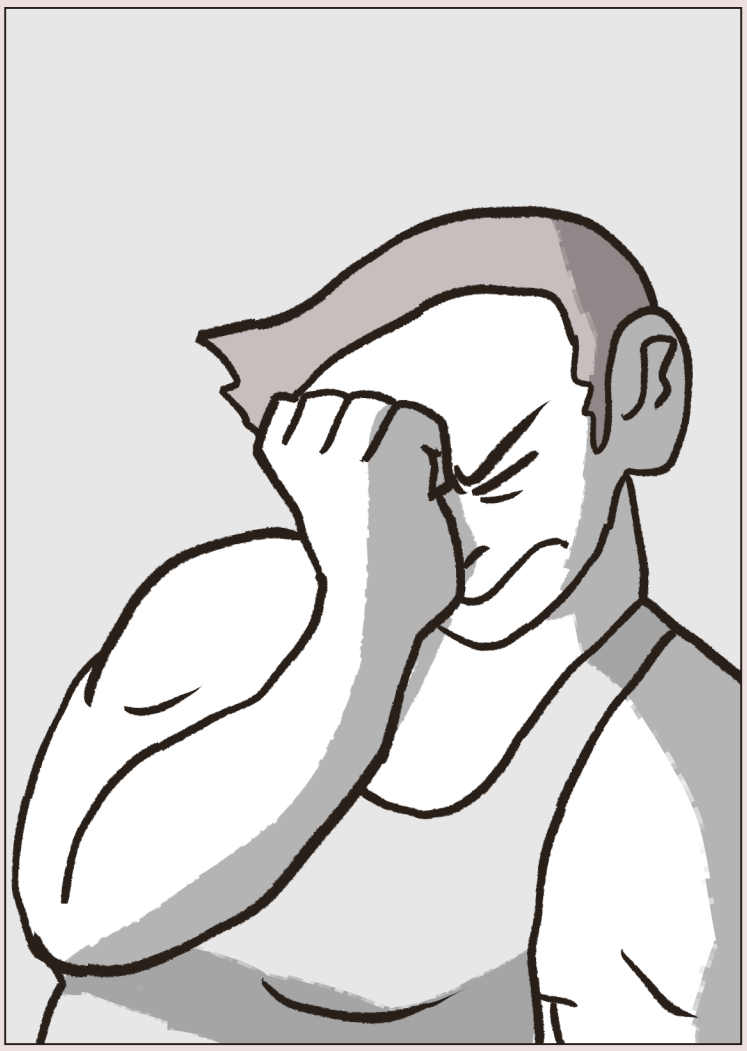
SOPHIE, I-

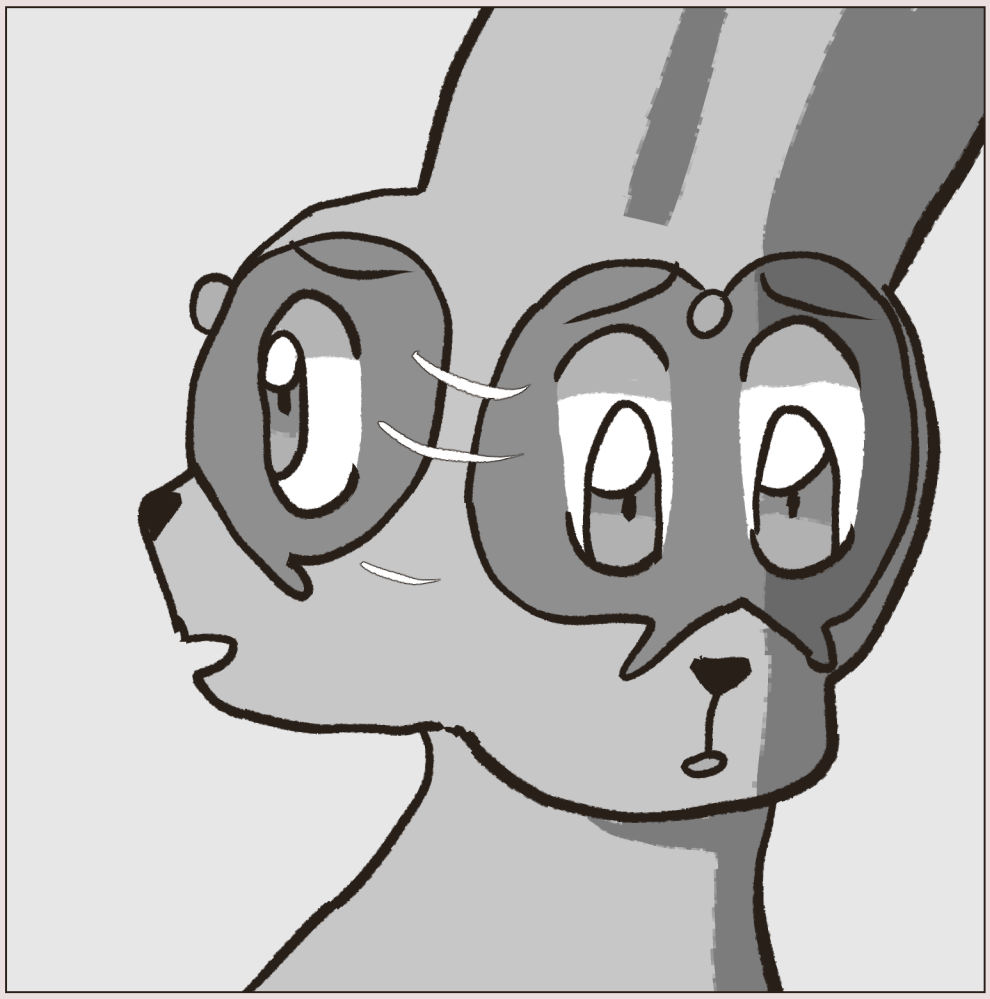
TOPAZ CAN STAY HERE, BUT YOU NEED TO LEAVE.
I-
CYRUS. GO.



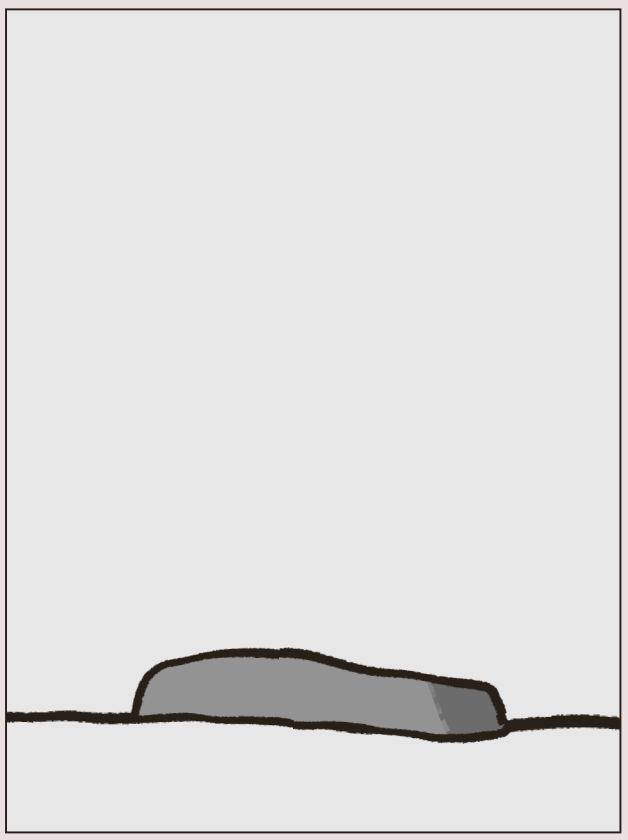


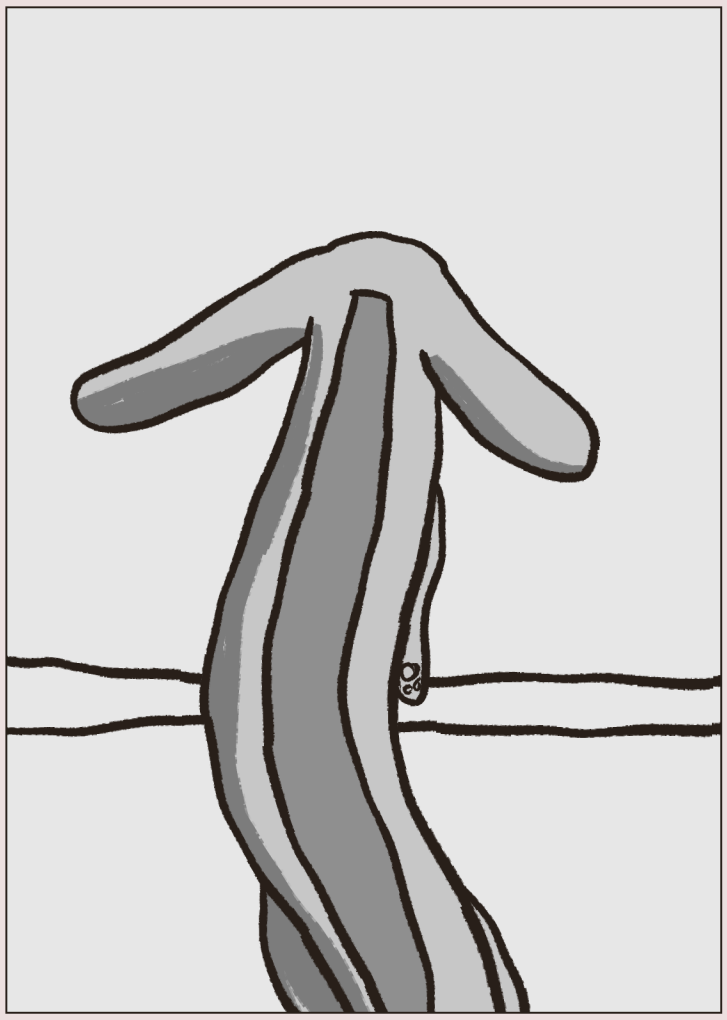


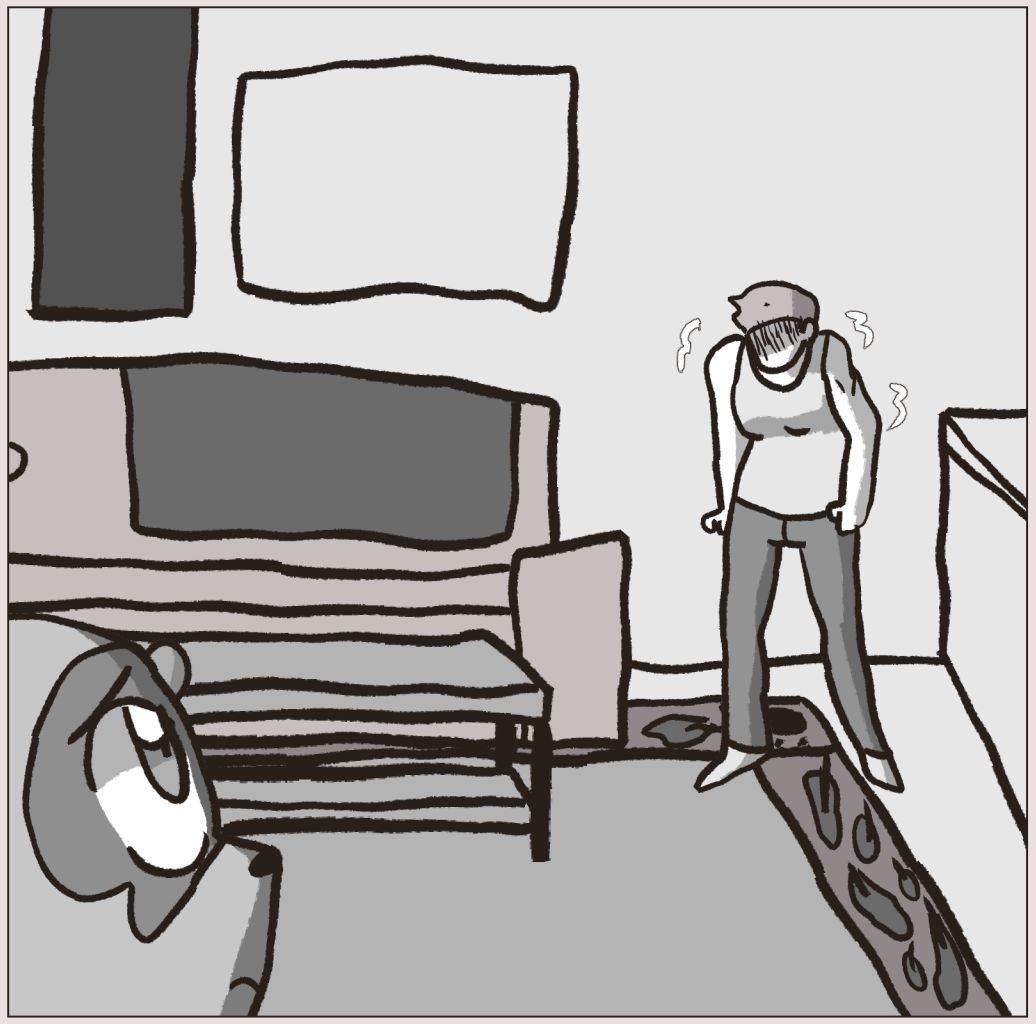




TOPAZ...
YOU CAN'T COME
WITH ME.
IT'S OKAY.

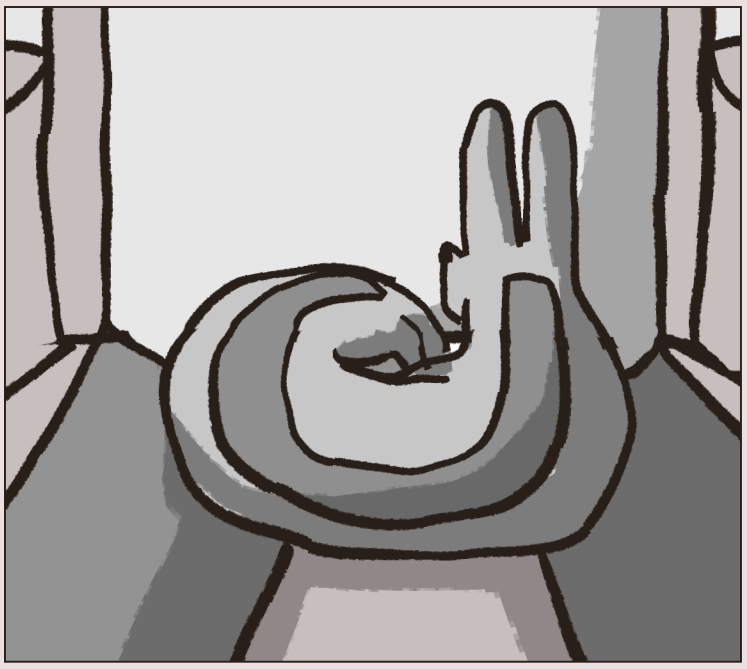


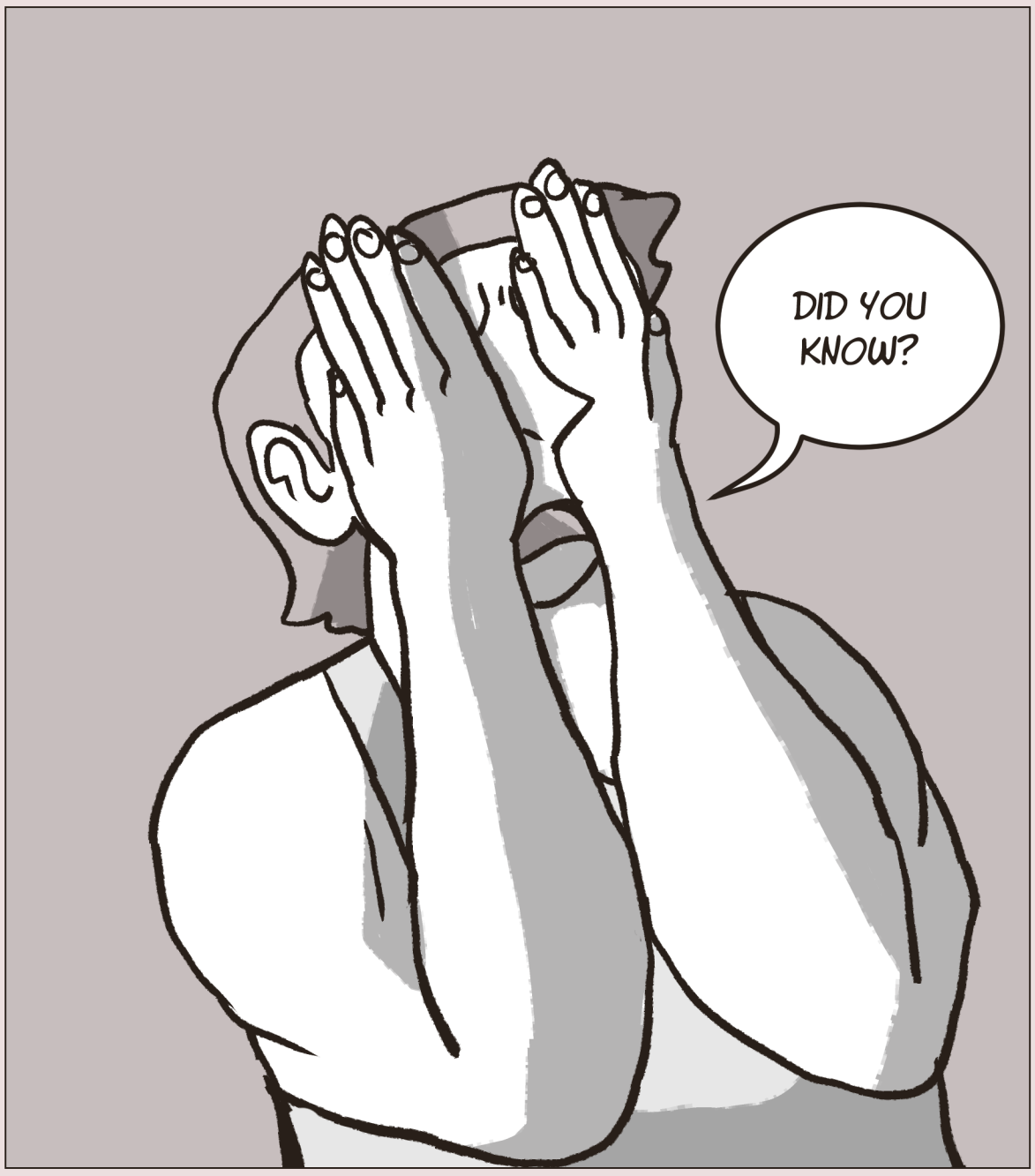




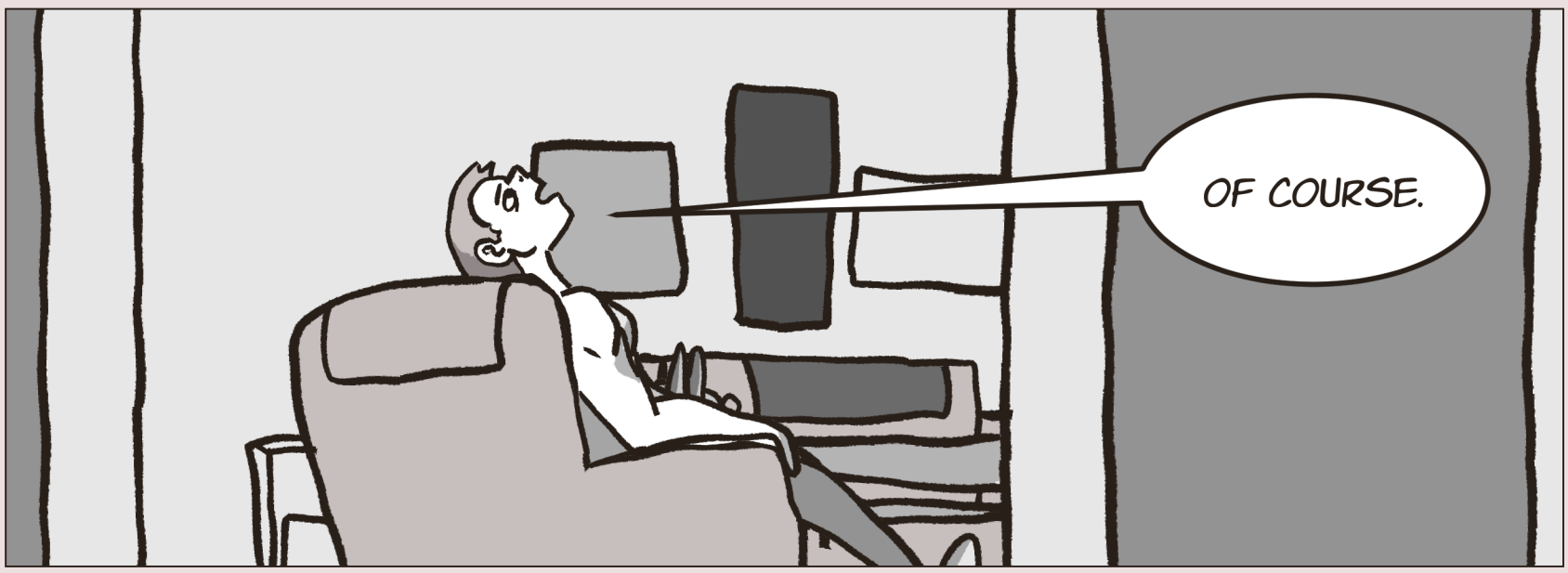
FUCK!!

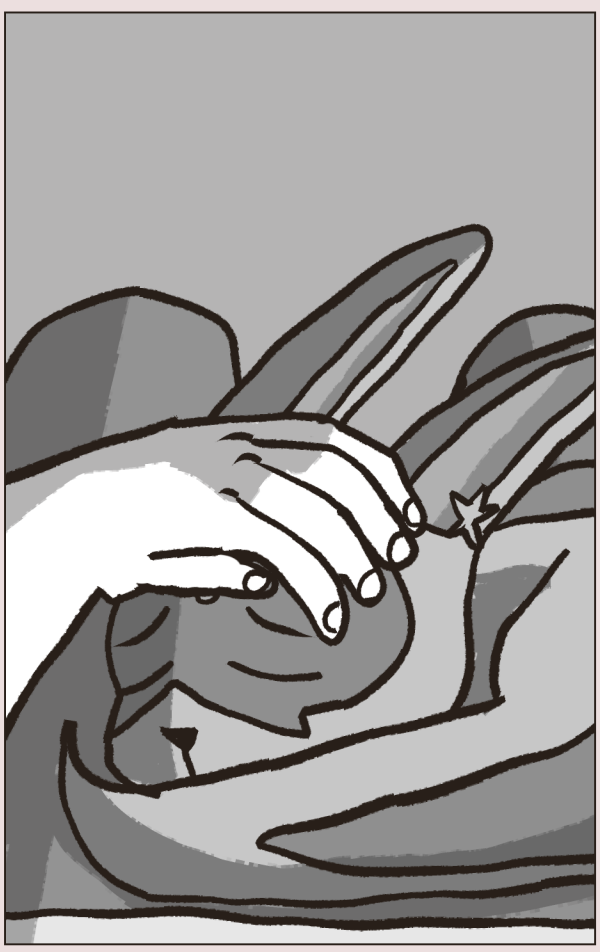
I'M...
I'M SORRY.




DID YOU KNOW?

OF COURSE YOU DID.
OF COURSE.


OF COURSE.



OF COURSE.